

YORK MEDICAL PRACTICE PATIENT INTEREST GROUP

Electronic Repeat Prescriptions - Batch Prescribing

Individual Prescriptions providing medication for a short-term condition are issued listing any medications prescribed. If necessary, these may be supplemented by the provision of a subsequent repeat prescription.

For management of longer-term conditions regular Repeat Prescriptions will be considered. Where suitable and agreed with the patient, eRD (electronic Repeat Dispensing), provides a Batch of prescription for up to 12 months, which will be sent electronically to the patient's nominated pharmacy.

During that period, when the next supply of medicines is due, the pharmacy already has the prescription and can dispense from the Batch, without the need to contact the surgery. This allows the patient to collect the medication from that pharmacy on a monthly or bi-monthly basis.

When the Batch is exhausted, it may be replaced by a further Batch authorised by the GP. This requires a request either from the patient or the pharmacy. It may need to be preceded by a review or medical test(s) to check the effectiveness of the medications and the patient's state of health.

YORK MEDICAL PRACTICE PATIENT INTEREST GROUP

A quick overview of the Repeat Prescription process

Batch prescription is when a medication for ongoing or long-term conditions has been pre-approved for a given period without seeing a GP each time when the medication runs out. However, not all items are suitable for Batch prescribing and therefore must be requested using the Standard Repeats process.

1. Best way for patients to request Batch items and GP-authorised Standard Repeats

Patients should clarify whether the medication they require is either a Batch medication, or a Standard Repeat medication, as this will dictate the process of how to request it.

- If it's on a Batch the pharmacist can usually supply it the same day, however one week's notice allows the pharmacist to prepare the items in good time and source any items if they are out of stock.
- If it's a Standard Repeat, patients with approved repeat prescriptions should submit these requests via the NHS app, practice website or with their pharmacy. This is then sent to the GP, provided that the GP is happy, they authorise it and send the prescription to the patient's nominated pharmacy electronically, via the Electronic Prescription Service. One week's notice allows enough time either for the patient to request from the GP, or for the pharmacist to email the surgery, have the request approved, and receive the electronic prescription for issue.

n.b. York Medical Practice requires 3 working days to authorise all prescription requests, so a one-week window provides a reliable buffer that avoids gaps in treatment.

2. Online ordering

Patients are recommended to use the NHS App to request prescriptions wherever possible.

- Once a Batch has been authorised during its period of validity the patient should then only communicate with the pharmacist for items included on the batch. It is important to note that you will NOT see medications on a Batch prescription on your NHS app,

- When the Batch is up for renewal you will need to request its replacement via the surgery website, or your pharmacy. Your pharmacist will usually advise you when you are coming to the end of your batch or will tell you when they have issued the last in the batch and advise you to contact the surgery for more medication to be issued.

- If an item is on a Standard Repeat and a patient tries to order it again via the NHS app, currently the app will not allow you to place a duplicate request as an active prescription request already exists.

Some pharmacies have their own online ordering portal. Patients can give their medication requests to the pharmacist who will forward them to the GP for approval and keep the patient updated.

3. How patients know what is / isn't on Batch

Patients are usually informed by the GP when a Batch is set up or additional items added to it. Your pharmacist can also confirm a patient's prescription status if they're unsure.

4. Renewal of a Batch and Medical Reviews

When the maximum number of authorised repeats in a Batch have been issued, reauthorisation may be dependent upon a review being completed. Sufficient time should be allowed for this process where it coincides with reauthorisation of a replacement Batch.

Patients with long term conditions are normally asked to book a medication review at least once a year, most of which, but not all, are aligned with the patient's birth month.

They will be notified by text when the review is due.

These will not necessarily run in parallel with the period of any Batch.

It is the patient's responsibility to check the results of the review and thereafter that the prescription has been requested either via the pharmacist or directly with the practice.

5. Synchronisation

Whilst GPs try to align prescriptions when they issue them, different prescribing rules apply for many medications, and unfortunately this may not be possible. As doses and therapies may change over time, patients are encouraged to discuss their individual prescribing requirements with the practice and request changes if necessary.